(c) whether it is a fact that the telephone number 198 for complaints in practically all the Exchanges in Delhi remains out of bound throughout the day and the people have to go to the "telephone exchanges' to lodge their complaints;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the telephones of all the supervisors and senior officers either remain unattended or engaged and all the advertisements in the Press intimatsng the telephone number of senior officers fo- contact become meaningless; and

(e) if so, what specific steps Government propose to take to set M.T.N.L. and Delhi Telephones in order and save the citizens of Delhi from avoidable harassment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The services have to some extent been affected due to large scale expansions of the network which has caused conjestion on some routes. However, steps are being taken to increase the capacity of the routes, monitor performance and maintain the quality of the telephone services.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No, Sir. Due to a number of calls coming at the same time it is likely that the numbers may be found engaged. The calls to those numbers are being monitored at highest level to judge the behaviour and efficiency of the concerned supervisors/ officers. Apart from these telephone numbers, all the officers are also meeting the public during the visiting hours.

(e) The various steps initiated to improve the functioning of telephones include:

(i) Rehabilitation of External Plant.

(ii) Replacement of fault prone underground telephone cables.

(iii) Increasing junctions between different telephone exchanges according to traffic.

(iv) Introduction of PCM system, optical fibre and Digital Microwave system on inter-exchange junctions.

Postponing the Inauguration of Telephone Exchange in Nalanda District

7483. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inauguration of the telephone exchange at village Salalpur, Block Exanagar-Sarai, district Nalanda, was postponed without any reasons while all the arrangements had been completed for the same;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when the Department is going to inaugurate that exchange now?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) Efforts are being made to take a building on rent in which the exchange will be installed only after which it can be commissioned.

Claims for refund of rental for non-functional telephone

7484. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of communications received by PRO III West area of the M.T.N.L. claiming refund of rental for the periods when telephones remained dead or non-functional during the months of March, April and May, 1994, the number out of them on which action was taken and rebate in rental was allowed; and